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REMARKS

Claims 21-39 are pending in this application. By this Response and Amendment, Claims 21 and 32 have been amended and claim 40 has been added as a new claim.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 38 and 39 were indicated as allowable over the prior art. Claims 28-31 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent format including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants submit that the amendment made to independent claim 21, from which claims 28-31 ultimately depend, places claim 21 and hence claims 28-31 in condition for allowance. In addition, since claims 26 and 27 depend from claim 38, Applicants submit that these claims should also be allowed.

II. Rejection Under §102 in view of Babuder

The Office Action rejected claims 21-27 and 32-37 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Babuder (US Patent No. 5,145,219). The Office Action states that Babuder discloses a device with first and second tubular members 12, 14 each having a sealing end face with a raised annular bead 30, 44, an inner bore 22, 40 wherein the sealing faces of the two members face each other. The Office Action further states that a sealing gasket 60 is captured between the sealing beads for sealing the coupling tubular members and that the gasket contacts surfaces 24 and 42 which are co-planar and radially outward of the sealing bead. The Office Action also refers to surfaces 24 and 42, indicating that such surfaces may include frictional surfaces in the form of knurling or roughness.

Claim 21, as amended, recites, in pertinent part, a coupling comprising:

“a sealing gasket captured between said sealing beads for sealing said coupling, wherein said frictional surface engages said sealing gasket to

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prevent relative rotation between said tubular members; said sealing gasket having two respective sides,
wherein said sealing gasket includes a sealing surface on each of said respective sides of said gasket, each of said sealing surfaces contacting one of that contacts said sealing beads of said tubular members and an anti-rotation surface on each of said respective sides of said gasket, each of said anti-rotation surfaces contracting one of that contacts said frictional surfaces surface of said tubular members, *wherein each of said respective sealing surfaces and anti-rotation surfaces are co-planar upon assembly of the coupling.*" (emphasis added).

As such, independent claim 21, as amended, recites a sealing surface, defined as the portion of the gasket that comes in contact with the sealing bead, and an anti-rotation surface, defined as the portion of the gasket that contacts the frictional surface of the tubular members. Independent claim 21, as amended, further recites that the sealing surface and the anti-rotation surface are co-planar upon assembly of the coupling.

As shown in Figure 4 of Babuder, reproduced herein below, Babuder does not disclose a gasket with co-planar sealing and anti-rotational surfaces upon assembly of the coupling. Babuder teaches a gasket member (60) which has a seal surface, defined by the portion that contacts the end face beads (30 and 44), and a bead, or an anti-rotation surface, (76). Babuder specifies that:

"it should be noted from FIG. 4 that *the axial height of the beads 76 is such that during make-up the beads 76 engage the associated end face 24, 42 prior to engagement of the beads 30, 44 with the sealing portion of the gasket member 60. This engagement by the beads 76 with the first and second coupling components 12 and 14 produces a frictional*

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driving connection between the two components to substantially reduce or eliminate the possibility of relative motion between these two components and the associated sealing gasket.” (emphasis added).

Babuder clearly states that anti-rotational surface (76) has an axial height extending from the gasket sealing surface. This is shown in Figure 4 below. Sealing surface (approximately at 60) is not coplanar with anti-rotational surface (76). Since each element of the claimed invention is not disclosed in the reference, Babuder does not anticipate claim 21, as amended, or its respective dependent claims. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

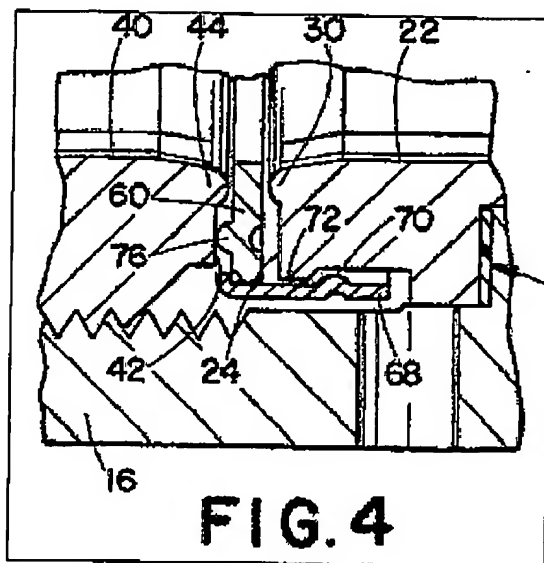


Figure 4 of US Patent No. 5,145,219 - Babuder

Claim 32, as amended, recites, in pertinent part, a gland comprising:

“a sealing end face, a raised annular sealing bead located on said sealing end face and an inner bore; and

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a frictional surface located radially outward of said raised annular sealing bead; wherein said sealing bead forms a sealing surface and said frictional surface forms an anti-rotation surface, and *wherein said sealing surface and said anti-friction surface are generally co-planar upon engagement with a sealing gasket.*" (emphasis added).

As such, independent claim 32, as amended, recites a gland that includes a sealing surface, defined as a portion of the sealing bead, and an anti-rotation surface, defined by the frictional surface located radially outward of the sealing bead. Independent claim 32 further recites that the sealing surface and the anti-friction surface are generally co-planar upon engagement with a sealing gasket.

Babuder discloses coupling components (12 and 14) that include a sealing surface along a bead (30 and 44) and anti-rotational surfaces (24 and 42) that may include knurling. However, as clearly shown in Figure 4, the sealing surfaces and beads are not generally coplanar. In fact, the coupling component must be used with a gasket with a raised bead (76) which contacts the surfaces (24 and 42). The bead (76) needs to be raised because surfaces (24 and 42) and sealing bead (30 and 44) are not generally coplanar. In other embodiments in Babuder, such as that shown in Figures 9-11, the fact that the sealing surface and anti-rotational surface are not coplanar is even more evident. In order to accommodate a planar gasket, a body portion (142) must be used in order to allow contact between the gasket and the sealing and anti-rotational surfaces of the coupling component. Since each element of the claimed invention is not disclosed in the reference, Babuder does not anticipate independent claim 32, as amended, or any of its respective dependent claims. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

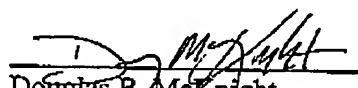
III. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicant believes that all of the claims in this case are now in condition for allowance and an indication to that effect is

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respectfully requested. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this case, the Examiner should feel free to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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